Punnett Square Bead Activity Reflection

1. What was your favorite part of the lesson?

Actively engaging the students helped them better understand how physical characteristics are actually expressed in organisms. They also realized that the allele passed from each parent to the offspring is completely random.

1. What worked well for the students?

Holding a white bead in one hand and a red in the other and having to “reproduce” with others allowed students to visually see how the results from the experiment compare to the theoretical probability shown on the Punnett square.

1. Why is this important?

Prior to this activity, students had a difficult time understanding Punnett squares and what they represented. Eighth graders participated with my seventh graders. Even though they were taught this as 7th graders last year, they actually understood it after we completed this activity. All the students really had a light bulb moment once we completed the activity and compared the experimental outcome with the theoretical probability.

1. What will you do in the future to improve the chance of this happening again?

This is one of my favorite lessons! I enjoy teaching genetics, and I also teach math. I reinforced how to change fractions to decimals to percents. Next year I plan to teach this lesson along with theoretical and experimental probability as well.